



Directorate of
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Afghanistan Situation Report

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1 March 1983

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AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT

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The plan, developed by Afghan exiles in Europe, may be a good indication of the kind of settlement most Afghans would accept.

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Soviet/DRA forces appear to be maintaining somewhat better control of Qandahar than in previous years.

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Infectious disease has been a major cause of noncombat Soviet casualties in Afghanistan and probably seriously reduces the effectiveness of Soviet military efforts. Although some measures to reduce the incidence of illness have been taken, infectious disease probably will continue to be a problem for the Soviets in 1983.

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This document is prepared weekly by the Office of Near East/South Asia and the Office of Soviet Analysis.

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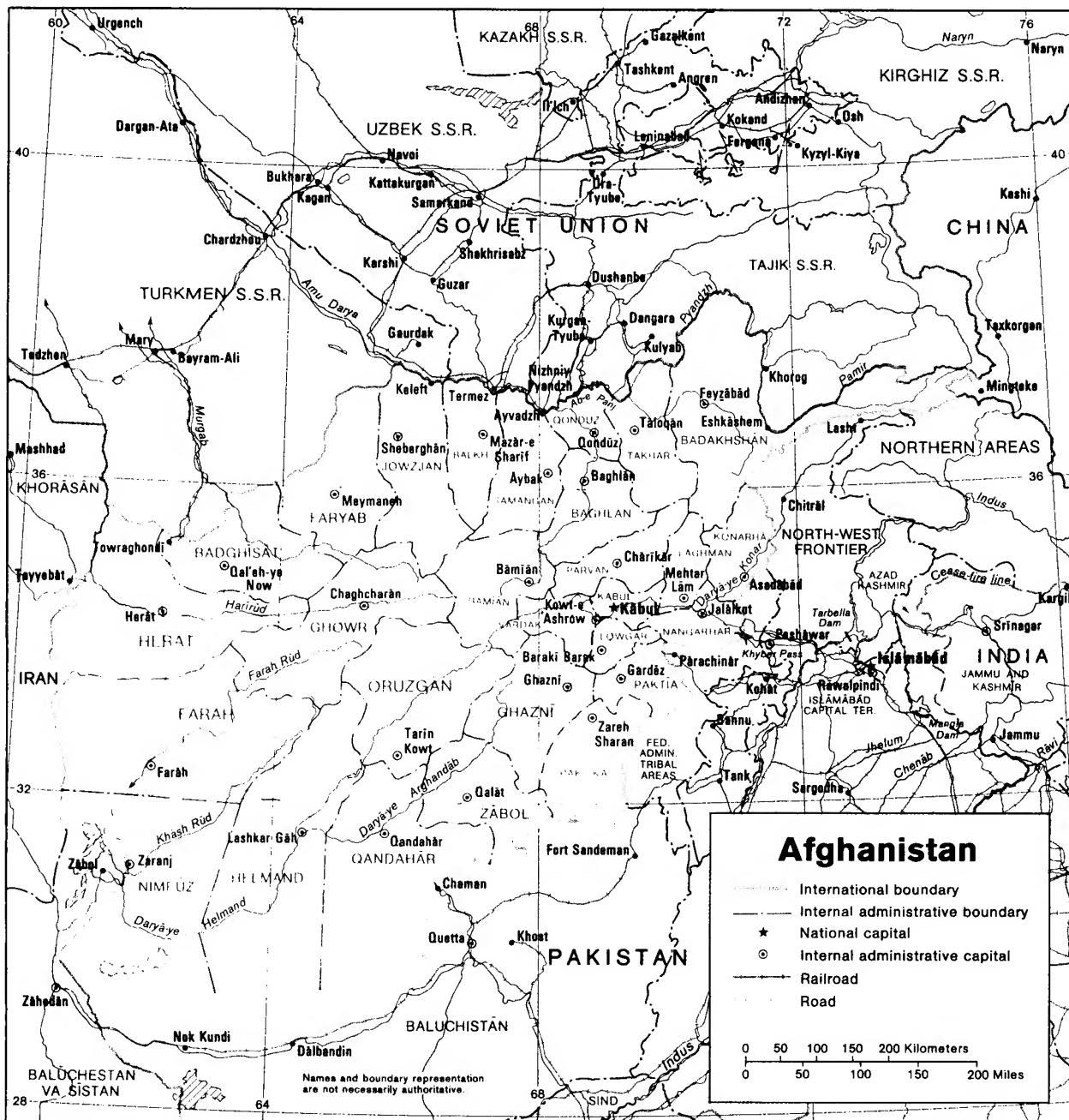


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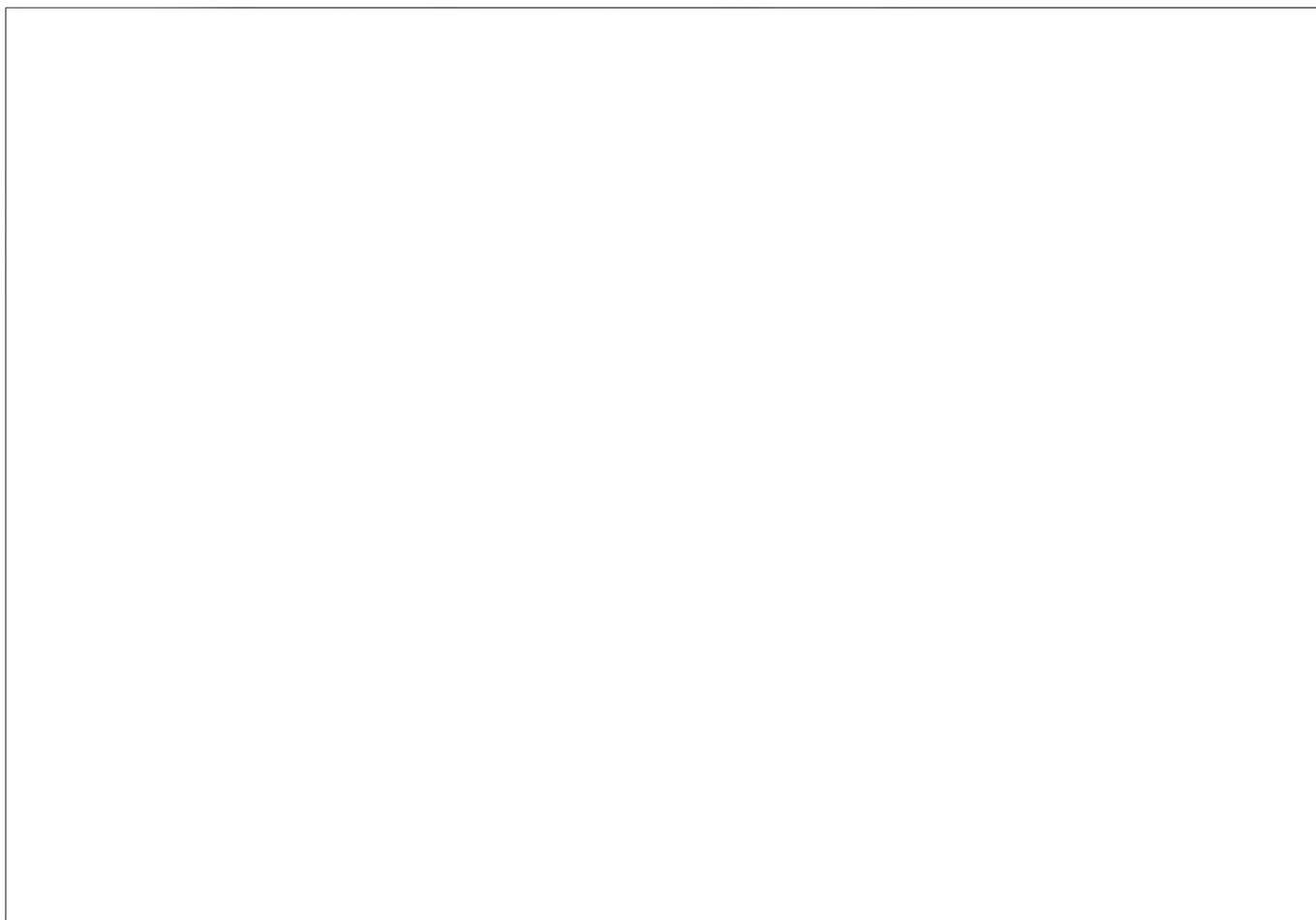
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EXILE PEACE PLAN

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The Afghan exile organization in Europe headed by former Prime Minister Yusuf plans to send a letter to resistance leaders urging the formation of a Council of National Guidance with authority to speak for all resistance groups. Included in the letter is a peace plan that calls for the following:

-- The unconditional, total, and immediate withdrawal of Soviet forces under UN supervision.



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-- The establishment of the Council of National Guidance as a provisional government.

-- The convening of a Loya Jirga--a body even the Communists recognize as the ultimate political authority in Afghanistan--to approve a new constitution.

Comment: The plan is designed primarily to provide a common position for the various resistance groups, with its usefulness in any negotiations with Moscow, at most, a secondary consideration. Because the former government officials who drew it up are realistic and well informed, we believe the plan is an accurate reflection of what the resistance--and most other Afghans--would accept. We doubt that Moscow would give much consideration to a peace settlement that, in effect, simply turns over Afghanistan to the resistance.

CONDITIONS IN QANDAHAR CITY

Three Qandahar businessmen report that Soviet troops and civilian advisers still rarely venture into Qandahar city and that DRA personnel still restrict their movements largely to the city's center and the network of military posts surrounding the city. But most of the fighting now takes place just outside the city, and one businessman notes that it has been more than a year since he has seen an insurgent carrying a weapon during the day inside the city.

Comment: Continued Soviet/DRA control of key points in Qandahar a year after their last major clearing operation indicates a decline in insurgent effectiveness. In 1980 and 1981, it usually took about six months for the insurgents to regain virtual control of the city after a major clearing operation.

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-- The US Consul in Peshawar reports at least two insurgent commanders were assassinated recently near the city...Resistance sources claim 36 insurgents belonging to moderate groups were killed in one month...Hizbi Islami was blamed for the attacks, but the killings could also be a KHAD effort to provoke fighting among the guerrillas.

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PERSPECTIVE

INFECTIOUS DISEASE--THE OTHER SOVIET ENEMY IN AFGHANISTAN

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The high incidence of infectious disease among Soviet troops in Afghanistan almost certainly has reduced their combat effectiveness during the last three years. The problems stem primarily from poor logistic support and a lack of preventive medicine in Soviet units. Soviet medical authorities have made some improvements in treatment and facilities that have reduced the number of illnesses in 1982. We believe, however, that medical, bureaucratic, and logistic shortcomings will continue to make infectious disease a major cause of Soviet casualties in Afghanistan and hamper their military efforts in 1983.

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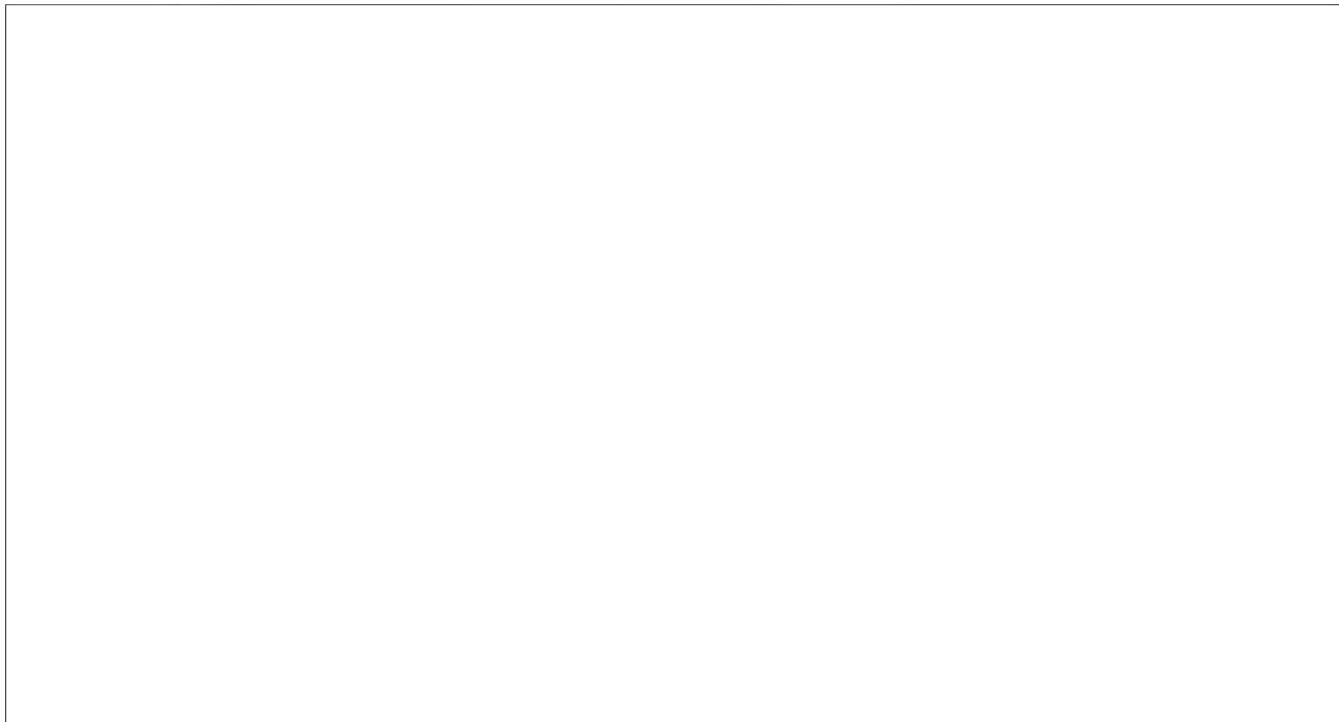
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A Failure of Logistics and the Soviet Medical Bureaucracy

The Soviets' ability to deal with infectious diseases in Afghanistan has been hampered by severe logistic shortfalls, principally in providing subsistence supplies, uncontaminated food, and potable water to their troops.

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We believe that the failure of Soviet military medical authorities both to anticipate logistic and medical problems, based on sound existing area knowledge, and to respond effectively to them once they had arisen was and is a major factor contributing to Soviet health problems in Afghanistan. Soviet military medical authorities are well aware of sanitary-epidemiological problems in Afghanistan and the measures to be taken against them. Nevertheless, few if any of these measures are believed to have been taken to protect the invasion force, and later efforts have been slowly and apparently indifferently implemented.

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